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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
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the wrong step to begin with. Her meeting with Palestine and Israel did not have equal representation as one is a prime minister and the other a president. Even though the US and Israel continue to recognize Hamas as a terrorist organization, the upcoming national consensus government of Palestine will again be ruled by Haniyeh of the Hamas organization. Given that fact, Israel and the US are engaging in a dialogue with the symbolic leader of Palestine instead of the Prime Minister who has the power to control the executive mechanism. The consensus initiative by Secretary Rice cannot bring any peace to the Middle East. Even if these three agree among each other, no government in Palestine can implement it or explain it to the public. In sum, the recent meeting between Rice, Olmert and Abbas is nothing but cosmetic."

Writing in the economic-political daily Referans, Cengiz Candar comments: "The developments in northern Iraq and the situation related to the Iran-US tiff along with Turkey's domestic concerns will directly shape the future direction of Turkish-American relations. All of this makes it even more important to know whether the Turkish Chief of General Staff talked about Iran with Vice President Cheney. Given the current situation, a cross border operation by Turkey into Northern Iraq, if and when it happens, will inevitably lead to a new political equilibrium in Iraq. The US normally would not normally give a green light to Turkey for this unless something tangible comes from Ankara. This means in practical terms that Ankara would have to agree to be on board with Washington on the Iran issue and in return the US would give a green light for Turkey's incursion. Otherwise, the US would never sacrifice Kurds because of Turkey's concerns -- meaning a green light remains a dream. In that respect one might wonder whether Turkey is capable of carrying out an operation despite the US. When we look for the answer to this question we have to bear in mind the consequences we will face."

TV Highlights
NTV (6 A.M.)

Domestic News

- A Five-storey building collapsed in Istanbul last night killing two people. Twenty-ix people were rescued from the rubble.
- A Comission on coping with global warming readies to submit their proposals to the Council of Ministers.

International News

- A suicide bomber struck a funeral in Baghdad on Tuesday killing at least seven people
- Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas said his talks with the US Secretary of State and Israel's Prime Minister were tense and difficult but not a failure
- Rene Van Der Linden, president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), issues call for ending the isolation of Northern Cyprus, and adds that the EU should fulfill its pledges to the Turkish Cypriots.

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

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